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THE HOUSE OF
LA GRANDE MARQUE, AT COGNAC
AND THE CHARENTE DISTRICT.

(From the Western Times.)

A correspondent writes:—"Having received an invitation from Mr. Victor Jouannet, the managing director of that extensive brandy house at Cognac, which is known in England under the title of La Grande Marque, I availed myself of it in order to inspect their enormous stock, and also that I might obtain some general information respecting the production of brandy in the Charante district. The Charante district, or as we should call it in England, the county of Charente, is one of the most interesting parts of France. This is owing to its production of brandy, the finest and most delicate spirit that can be distilled, and represents one of the most important sources of the general wealth of France. The largest town in the district is Angouleme, but Cognac, although having a population of only about 9,000, is the most important. This town is situated in the neighbourhood of the finest brandy producing vineyards, known as the champagne district of Cognac. The district which surrounds this and produces brandy next in quality and value is called Borderies, and the last, or as I may say the third growth, is produced in the outside district which extends round the towns of Angouleme, Saintes and Mirambeau, and almost to the banks of the river Garonne. This is called the Bois district. The pure Cognac brandy is distilled from wine grown in the three districts, Champagne, Borderies, and Bois, and this the leading houses of Cognac are most anxious to preserve in that native purity which has made Cognac so famous. Any merchant is regarded as acting fraudulently who dares to mix with the brandy of Charente district spurious spirit, or even spirit made from wine grown in any other district. The average crop of the Charente district is about 600 gallons of wine per acre, and the surface cultivated being 250,000 acres yield about 150,000,000 gallons, which, when distilled, represent 15,000,000 gallons as the average annual yield of brandy. It is the general impression in England that the distillation of brandy is performed by the Cognac houses, and that large firms are necessarily holders of large farms; but the brandy merchants are no more producers than our brewers are culivators of hops and barley. No large farms indeed exist in the Charente district. It is stated on good authority that there are not five proprietors who hold 75 acres of vineyard, not ten landowners possessing 40 acres, while holders of 12 acres do not exceed 30 in number. As in England the farmer goes to market with the sample of corn, so in the Charente district the French farmer attends the Cognac market with samples of his brandy, and thus the trade have to make up their stocks by the purchase of an innumerable number of small parcels. The stores of La Grande Marque, which are situated at the south end of the park of the town of Cognac, cover two acres of ground and hold 25,000 hogsheads, which contain about one and a half million gallons of the finest brandy that could be purchased, including the celebrated vintages of 1851, 1845, and 1835. To accumulate this enormous stock, purchases had to be made with some thousands of different farmers, and the value is of such an extent that it is insured with eighteen different Insurance Companies. The quality of the different samples of brandy varies very considerably, so that the superiority of the stock of a Cognac house depends entirely upon great judgment in their selections and the holding sufficient capital to be always able to buy at the right time and direct from the farmers."

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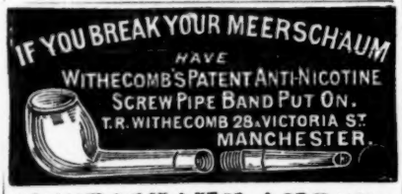

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THE BRAZENOSE CLUB.

IT is not easy, on the spur of the moment, to recollect precisely the names and the characters of the clubs now existing in Manchester. Let it suffice that most of them have been duly described and chronicled in the columns of the *Sphinx*. One remembers their character indeed more easily than their names. There is the club political; the club social; the club professional; the club commercial; the club genteel. The youngest of the clubs, the Brazenose, differs from all these: it has a *raison d'etre* of its own.

It is just possible that class clubs tend to what is called breeding in and in, and are consequently a little emasculating. They may enfeeble the moral and intellectual stamina of their supporters. Class clubs suffer inevitably from a monotony of ideas, and cannot but circumscribe the horizon which embraces men and affairs. They may promote or intensify dogmatism and make men intolerant of adverse opinion. The club sentiment is a power, but it may be a power for evil. You may prolong the life of a superstition, or a fallacy or a monopoly, or an imposture, almost indefinitely, if you will only give it club enough. These things die unless they are kept in countenance. A class club begins the world with a Shibboleth. It must have something to swear by, and the members swear by it—terribly, as they did in Flanders. But although it may be the tendency of a certain class of clubs to develop an ex-cathedra and oracular temper, and cultivate a certain kind of disdain for the clubless, which can only be answered by a punch on the head (morally administered, of course). Manchester is, perhaps, the last place in the world where that sort of thing can ever become seriously mischievous. We may say that, in this respect, the more clubs the merrier—and the wiser. In the matter of egotism and intolerance they neutralize each other. Moreover, a man's business may be cosmopolitan though his political views may be circumscribed by Spring Gardens or St. James's Square, and your business man is wonderfully charitable to human error. Then, again, many men are members of more clubs than one. They are always taking political banes and antidotes. We wont say that it would be an easy thing for a man to be a member of the Reform Club and the Conservative Club at the same time, but heavens! we will wager that we know an unscrupulous glutton of this kind who would even do that, if the respective committees could be persuaded that it was at all compatible with decorum.

Revelling, as it were, already in clubs, one naturally interrogates the Brazenose as to its Whence and Why and Whither. Well, there are more theories than one. Although the crop of clubs in London is bewildering, yet it turns out that there is a side of metropolitan humanity which only the Athenæum Club can adequately satisfy. So in Manchester. It might be difficult to survive the loss of the patriotic refuges in St. James's Square or Spring Gardens. Chaos might come again if the gilded and patrician Union in Mosley Street knew its place no more, and they, who had any, might gnash their teeth if the temples of gentility vanished in a cataclysm; but soul-entrancing as these things are, they do not and never can realize the idea of the Brazenose.

"Don't you think," we remarked the other day to our old friend Langsyne, who was talking to us in his usually ardent and dishevelled manner about his favourite Brazenose, "Don't you think that your ideal of a club is like every other ideal, a trifle too good to be true?"

"Not a bit of it," struck in our interlocutor promptly. "The Brazenose Club has got to be an intellectual and moral necessity. Under the current commercial dispensation you cannot do without it, as it will be found that some of the best men of the other clubs will gravitate to this. Without canting about it, they will have a notion that there is such a thing, even for a Manchester club, as another and a better world."

"The world of plain living and high thinking, perhaps"—we interpolated cynically.

"Well," rejoined Langsyne, "The confraternity of the Brazenose, without adopting a monastic severity of living, exhibit nevertheless a wise indifference to the gorgeous. As to the quality of their thinking, you may, if you like, look over the archives of the brotherhood, and draw your own conclusions. I'm going there now," he continued, "come along and I'll frank you."

Having an hour at our disposal we were willing to be franked, and we presently turned out of Albert Square into Brazenose Street, where we found the club about half way down on the right hand side of the street. "You see," remarked our friend, "the street has an elderly sobriety of aspect; a certain raven-like gravity of demeanour, not altogether inconsistent with its cloister-like title. It has no hint about it of the thronging tumult of Market Street, or the brandnew architectural magnificence of Portland Street. When Waterhouse's municipal palace, 'white from the mason's hand,' soars into the azure, and lends a new and more delicate beauty to the shrine where the royal marble glitters, the contrast between new and old will be very striking—but here we are," he exclaimed, a little sorry, we fear, to have his thunder checked, in mid-volley by the club itself.

The outside of the building is only remarkable for being rather big and rather new, and for the legend along the front, cut in stone, whereby we learnt that the place was called Somerset Buildings. "I suppose," remarked Langsyne as we entered, "that every club has a body and a soul. You see clubs in their material part very much resemble each other—are indeed as like as two peas. Like other clubs the Brazenose possesses a luncheon and dining room, an assembly and smoking room, lavatory, kitchen, wine cellar—and the rest. All that sort of thing is ample and faultless," added our friend during a minute's ablution in the lavatory. "I think," he pursued, as he touched up his moustache artistically, "that there are only two things you can't do at the Brazenose. You can't go to bed and you can't play at billiards. The men here being tolerably wide-awake and able to talk pleasantly, couldn't go to sleep if they would, and wouldn't go to sleep if they could. As for the spot stroke, about which everybody is raving since the defeat of Roberts, something of that kind can be done anywhere."

Presently we entered the smoke room—a spacious and beautiful chamber, over which the eye ranges with a certain charmed satisfaction. The place is of elegant proportions and sufficiently lofty; carpeting quietly luxurious; upholstery, perfect; light brown oak furniture, tables, couches, chairs—everything. By the way, the great arm chairs are miracles of comfort and beauty, and the furniture generally shows what art can do with an oak tree. Glowing upon the walls are water-colour and other drawings, contributed by the artist-members; bookshelves with a goodly array of books fill the recesses by the fireplaces; newspapers, magazines, reviews are upon the tables; and here and there is placed a bust of matchless grace or antique grandeur. A number of gentlemen were seated at the tables, writing, or reading, or quietly conversing, or taking a glass of wine or a cigar. "Nice place, isn't it," remarked Langsyne, with an air of serene complacency. Our content was absolute, and we said so. We found that everything relating to creature comforts was simply perfect, and that a certain elegant ideal reigned everywhere. "Yes, and at dinner or luncheon" said L., "you are sure to have Attic salt to it."

Taken altogether, we found the merely mortal part of the Brazenose the most tasteful and captivating seclusion we could imagine. We learnt that the club consists of 200 ordinary, 50 country, and 20 asssociate members. The qualification of associate members is that they be students or members of some artistic, scientific, or other intellectual profession, and be uncertain of permanent residence in Manchester. The club itself is formally set forth as having been "instituted to promote the association of gentlemen of artistic professions, pursuits, or tastes." It would have been a wonder indeed if so capital a project had not been almost immediately successful. The list of ordinary members is already nearly filled. It may be useful to know that "in the election of members four adverse votes shall exclude; but not less than ten members of the committee shall be present and vote on the occasion."

"It is clear," we remarked to L., "that a candidate must win his spurs before he wears them."

"True," he replied; "and without accusing the committee of estab-

lishing a too exalted standard for candidates, I may say that it is easier for a camel to achieve his traditional difficulty than for a gentleman 'of literary, scientific, or artistic professions, pursuits, or tastes' to enter the sanctuary of the Brazenose if he be not something of a Crichton or a Bayard."

We remarked that the list of names of members (which had been placed in our hands) was very variously and happily representative.

"All the talents, without doubt," he replied. "Why shouldn't we have all the talents in a club, just as you sometimes have them in a cabinet? You may find ability enough here to achieve anything. The men who come here are possible members of an administration, or a fragment of future parliaments, or a school of painting, or, By'r Lady, they could build churches, or give you a new translation of Horace, or be as daintily and incisively epigrammatic as Martial. They could write you a pantomime, or mount one, or play one. They could cast you a drama with some of the best names on the English stage. They could give you an essay on Roast Pig scarcely inferior to that of dear old Charles. A *Saturday Review* could be edited here, savagely splendid as the original Reviler. If another treaty of commerce should be wanted, the man will be here when the hour is. Our Rembrandt will paint you the portrait of an emperor, or a pencil as tireless and more imaginative than Gustave Doré's will furnish you with a study of Giant Despair for a new edition of Bunyan. In another style of art, now that Manchester is building its palaces, my friend Polychrome can adorn them. We have here visible without their wigs embryo Lord Chancellors who could furnish you with a new Bankruptcy law, or an Irish land bill; or should you, like Prince Pierre, chance to shoot a journalist, and want an advocate, you can have both journalist and advocate. If the journalist in question insists on a *post mortem*, he can be accommodated on the spot. We have the merriest and most genial Medico extant, who will furnish you with 'parmacity for an inward bruise,' and laugh you well again in a twinkling. We ——"

"Could your club do anything with the Manchester death rate?" we broke in rather rudely, "or send a missionary to the corporation?"

"I am not so sure about *that*," said Langsyne. "*That*, I suppose, *is* one of the Augean difficulties which, if the club perceives the full dignity of usefulness, it will one day find a broom for. To be sure, the Mayor is a member of the club; but, after all, the kingdom of Heron is an exceedingly limited monarchy. The Mayor reigns a good deal, I dare say, but he is not permitted to govern. However, don't let us be municipal whatever we are."

We parted with our friend, who had an engagement on the Exchange shortly afterwards. "I am rather prosy, perhaps, on this subject," he said, as he was going. "An earnest fellow always has an idol and a mania. Mine, you see, is just now the Brazenose Club. It seems so much better than a merely wallowing, swallowing institution. The clever people, I think, should get pretty well together. The money of the country is fairly organized perhaps; the brains should be. England has got to be the land of two idolatries: money and intellect. The first has its temples, and a jolly queer worship it is; the second should have its chapels of ease. One doesn't need to di-parage money, which indeed is 'a good familiar creature when well used.' A fellow may well congratulate himself when, as Eothen has it, 'he has got out of the scrape of being alive and poor;' but, after all, brains is master of the Universe. Institutions like the Brazenose have always arisen to give a certain nobility of thought and manner to opulent communities In Lancashire, we are rich beyond the dreams of avarice. In spite of the intermittent cycles of commercial prostration, the fat years and the lean years of the young Hebrew dreamer, our wealth is boundless. It is a good sign that our rich men are getting to be rather ashamed of seeming proud of their luck in the matter of ingots, but our Cœsus is not ashamed of seeming proud of his pictures, or his library, or his literary and artistic friendships. These are symptoms of a happier and nobler time. A club like the Brazenose helps to fix a standard of intellect and manners beneath which no man may fall without loss of caste. It subordinates brass to brains, and pays tribute money to the true Cæsar. What the *Saturday Review* calls blood and culture is good in its way, but not *out* of its way. So is money and culture; but the Brazenose should have no duality of worship. It should be a monotheism, and the god of its idolatry should be, and I think is—Genius."

Langsyne was rather long-winded, but we listened, although he *is* a visionary.

[STUDIES IN NATURAL HISTORY.]

THE DRUNKARD.

FINE him five shillings and costs, or let the charge be dismissed. What is the use of writing about him? He is out of the pale of civilization; he is a beast; he has poured molten fire down his throat; he has grasped at lamp-posts and occasionally found none, when, as a natural consequence, he has tumbled down and become dirty—dirty outside, filthy in—a soiled deformity, laughing at the wrong time, crying at the wrong time; unable to wind up his watch, throwing his braces about his own bed-room as if they had injuriously entreated him; getting his costume about his imbecile legs until he looks like a bantam with feathered heels; persisting in going to sleep on a form or chair, or any incongruous chattel which is hard and inappropriate; desiring brandy to be brought to him when he knows that his silly brains are incapable of standing more, but thinking himself another man and wanting brandy for *him;* idiotically saying to his wife and baby corporately, "Do you allow smoking?"—as if the answer of either of them would make the slightest difference; and so on and so on. You know how it is with the drunkard. If you say you do *not* know, you must either be a humbug or an innocent—these are sometimes convertible terms.

Let us know what we are about before we proceed in our enterprize. I am not dealing or proposing to deal with the habitual drunkard, because habitual drunkenness I regard as equivalent to lunacy, and as demanding, like lunacy, the intervention of the State. I am endeavouring to notice the ordinary run of drunkards who take too much, not regularly perhaps, but far too frequently. We hear occasionally of the line which but thinly divides the class which pays poor rates from that other class which subsists upon them—the men too proud to be paupers and too poor to be rated. Do we ever, when denouncing intemperance, recollect that there are thousands who drink just enough to escape that charge—drink just level, so that not a drop is spilt, but who are in the English, and still more in the Scotch, sense "fou" all the same? I don't fancy such men, and I detest their self-control. They drink and run away in order that they may run and drink another day. These are men of no imagination, and, without wishing to pledge either the Rechabites or the Jebusites or the Jesuits to my opinion, I still think that a freer and more imaginative drunkard on his back in the street, with his hat rolling about him like a mad orrery, is a pleasanter sight to the philanthropist than one of these level topers. Barring the habituals, and only pledging myself to the opinion, I always regard with some degree of sympathy a toper who is, I was going inappropriately to say, waterlogged, in the streets. Why should I not have that feeling of sympathy towards him? I prefer him to a mendicant any day in the week. An old proverb says that there is truth in the toper propped against a lamp-post; but there is no truth whatever in the mendicant. When it is pretended that a drunkard is lost to all sense of shame, reeling about and staggering, we must none of us be led away by such loose talk. What the drunkard is lost to is a sense of conventionality and double facedness. If he were only filled to the bung and had not run over, he would give some one a shilling to fetch him a cab, thereby consulting the amenities and being a good Christian; but should the liquor have risen above the bung level, he would save his shilling and not his appearance, and struggle towards his home without his cab. Which of these men has got farther from the path of virtue?

I have long had the belief—a deliberate belief and not a fancy—that women were fond of drunken men—that is, not the regular sots, but the intemperate men; and it is singu-

BRITISH MUSEUM

lar that where over-the-markishness is not regular but intermittent, the women look for this caper as for an amusement, and will not grumble at a little self-sacrifice in order that the bumping toast may go round for their husbands. Amongst the operative classes this is not to be wondered at, considering that drink, especially in the agricultural districts, was and is the only distraction left for the poor lean spiders who thus spin out their monotonous life webs. If any one thinks he can gainsay this let him do so, but I shall ask for a bill of particulars. Distractions we want, all of us, and distractions we must have. If any lady or gentleman will kindly indicate the distractions of a day labourer in a purely rural district, or of a handicraftsman in a small country town, save and except excisable liquors, I shall consider their esteemed favours and acknowledge their receipt. If human nature could cling like ivy to Mutual Improvement Societies, or if it could as a whole quench its parched lips by being examined and received for confirmation by the Bishop, or if it could be electrified by curious speculations as to a future state. got up so to speak with theatrical properties, and fitted by its ingenious and horrible materialism to strike terror into savages more perhaps than into Christians, then the clodhopper might find a fair rival to the alehouse. But it is a crushing imposture to pretend, that whilst for a good round century at all events the church and the alehouse have always run in couples, the latter has always had the pull because the parishioners were beasts. If the voice of the "reading desk" could not charm them, why was not something else tried as a temporary expedient? Is it a cheering reflection that even at this day the church and the alehouse are still running in couples, but not neck and neck, the latter nearly always finishing first? The real ecclesiastical answer to the immorality of the day as regards drunkenness is 5s. and costs. Consequently when men as a rule are referred to drunkenness and gyncastics (that is, up and down fighting) for their distraction, what can we expect?

Have good and pious men never found distraction in the bottle? No doubt, but they have never gone into the streets to declare it. What amount of moral turpitude would attach to a hermit who, sworn to solitude but not to sobriety, got as drunk as a lord every night? As nearly as I can make out, if we were not all chained together like convicts marching to our doom, but were quite independent marchers, the drinking would not matter much. Drinking would not then be worse than gluttony, or avarice, or pride, or lying, or hypocrisy, or cheating, as it is always represented to be at present, so that a sober impostor has got to be regarded as nearer to Paradise than he who pursues the path of intoxicated rectitude. In the adjustment of the ethical balance as respects intemperance, it has always seemed to me that the poor man labours under a serious disadvantage, in the first place because he has to drink most horrible liquors for his refreshment, to say nothing of his excitement; and in the second place his position in life, his duties or his avocations, all render him more liable to detection and criticism than his richer fellows Take a cabman waiting on a wintry midnight for his fare, whom he has heard through the window blinds carousing for two or three hours, and being called a jolly good fellow. This tedious tarrying in the cold sleet, coupled with the exhilarating influence of the good fellows and the jollity behind the window blinds, has tempted cabby to the gin shop over the way, where for the last hour he has perhaps drunk glass for glass with the gentlemen. But how different the liquors, and how different the result! The gentleman has at length (perhaps at full length) been got into the cab, and the driver has had to be fetched to his duty. His duty has become rather a burden to him, and he drives into a ditch or into another vehicle, overturning the cab and inverting the fare, who is found insensible, owing to what is called "the brutal intoxication" of 50419. The fare gets revived and sent home; the driver gets discharged and perhaps imprisoned—both drunkards, you see, but not both drinking under the same conditions. I find little consolation in being advised that the conscience of the fare in this case must have been acutely stung.

There ought to be a standard measure of drunkenness somewhere in this kingdom, so that all could go and get their statistics there. As long as we have medical men preaching drink in one direction, under licence of the College of Physicians, and teetotallers preaching the reverse in another direction, under the supposed licence of the New Testament—as long as the drunken magistrate of the previous night who rode home in his own brougham can have power to fine the drunken packer brought before him in the morning, not because the packer was drunk but because he could not afford a brougham—so long will all the wind-instruments which are blowing for the Maine Liquor Law be stertorous and strident enthusiasms, which the working men will not even take the trouble to laugh at.

EXHIBITION OF WATER COLOUR DRAWINGS.

I.—THE EARLIER MASTERS.

IT seldom happens that so many valuable and interesting drawings are collected together as are now on view at the Royal Institution. The collection contains 435 works of all kinds and styles, and is really an history of English water colour painting, for it includes drawings of every manner from Varley to Birket Foster. The speciality of the exhibition this year is the number of examples of the earlier painters. There are over twenty by David Cox; Robson, De Wint, Copley, Fielding, and Barrett are well represented, and there is one drawing by Turner of Oxford, a painter very little known here in the north. As a whole the drawings are well hung, and the usual error of judgment in regard to the colour of the tickets by which they are numbered is not shown so much this time as on former occasions. But it may still be asked why should the labels be of any particular colour? A brown as nearly gold as possible, and a quarter the size of those in present use, would be quite visible enough for all purposes, and in no case should the label be placed on the glass if it thereby hides any part of the drawing. If at any future time a similar number of drawings of equal quality should be brought together, we would suggest that they be arranged as far as possible in chronological order, for by doing so the educational effect of the Exhibition would be increased, and if an Exhibition be not somewhat educational it is nothing.

In our notice of the collection we propose to take the pictures in the order of their age, and therefore we begin with J. Varley. A Landscape (144) shows that quality of low-toned colour, always warm and rich, and that peculiarly artificial composition and conventionality of tree drawing which influenced all the earliest water colour artists, and is to be found as lately as in many of the works of Copley Fielding. About this picture there is a certain charm, though it is hard to say where; for it has neither the classic grace of Barrett, nor the delicacy of colour of Fielding. Perhaps it is due to a largeness of treatment which almost amounts to solemnity. Another drawing by Varley (147) is more classical in composition and richer in colour, and would seem to be a later work; though smaller than the last, it is more pleasing in every way.

Robson's Ely Cathedral (44) is a large and important drawing treated in a powerful and yet simple manner. The cathedral stands in the middle distance—from that to the foreground runs a flat piece of meadow studded with cattle; and the immediate foreground is composed of herbage and trees treated conventionally; the tone of colour is throughout charming, and the composition is much the same as in

most of the works of that time, the picture being fringed, almost framed, by the foreground objects.

Of the many pictures by George Barrett, the large drawing, a Landscape (hung next to Turner's Falls of the Clyde, against which it holds its own most successfully), is the most important. Like most of this artist's work it conveys an impression of realism, or at any rate possibility, without being realistic. Every form has been sacrificed for beauty and completeness of composition; and in colour, everything for the one expression of sunlight. Not the sunlight of most modern painters, with every shadow expressed from every object, and every reflected light tried for, and the result a confusion; but sunlight, slightly veiled by mist of course, but still so strong as to simplify everything else between it and the spectator. The same may be said of most of the other drawings by Barrett. There is always in them a great striving after beauty of a kind, artificial perhaps, but yet very delightful, and, as in the case of Turner's early pictures, showing strongly the influence of Claude. It is scarcely necessary to enumerate all the drawings by this artist, but attention may be called to Sunrise: Team of Horses and Waggons (300); Evening (334) and a Cnemical Landscape (379), as being most beautiful drawings where all are beautiful.

One of the most thoroughly honest and masculine of all English landscape painters was De Wint, of whose work there are many delightful specimens. The least satisfactory is the View of Dunster, Somerset (19), in which there is less of that calmness of composition generally to be expected from this painter; there are beautiful passages, yet the whole is confused, and the signs of time are apparent in the colour. But the Landscape (113) contributed by Mr. Peter Allen, is wonderfully powerful and effective. The subject consists of undulating land, with small ugly-shaped hills in the middle distance, a broken country road in the foreground, a windmill, and little else; but the theme is painted in so large a manner, the colour is so true, and the details so well understood, that in spite of the nature of the subject, which is about the last a modern painter would choose, the picture is most impressive and almost beautiful. The delicacy of colour and tone in the distance, where the chalky hills tell as light against the grey sky, is simply exquisite. Another great drawing and much more *beautiful*, by reason of its subject, is On the Thames (165). Here, as in all his pictures, De Wint is realistic, painting as far as possible the impressions of what he sees, which is very different from what is commonly called "painting what you see." The calm beauty of the Thames is given as near perfection as has ever been achieved; though it is the type of the Thames in every way, in true form and character, in size and in sentiment. There are many other drawings by De Wint, and all are most worthy of study. In some few, signs are to be found of what looks like fading of colour, or rather change of colour. In one small drawing in particular, Loch on the Avon (268), the peculiar red forms in the sky seem like the result of the Indian red having destroyed the blue with which it had been mixed. Imagine the red patches to be a grey of the same tone and they are comprehensible, and give form to the clouds; at present they are meaningless and, in colour, out of harmony with the rest of the picture.

What is to be said of glorious old David Cox's work that has not been said many times already? He is the greatest painter of English landscape we have ever had; he gives us all varieties of scenes under all kinds of effects, and, in spite of strong individuality of style (mannerism some would call it), is only to be wondered at for the ease and perfection with which all kinds of subjects are treated with almost equal success. To him nothing comes amiss. Moorlands, lowlands; scenery wild or pastoral, sea coast or inland, in calm weather or in storm; the impression of the scene itself is given, and the only thing by which we are reminded of the artist himself is the execution; that there should be mannerism in *that*, is unavoidable, especially when the artist is prolific of work, and that work slight and rapid. All the pictures of David Cox in this collection are of his middle or latest period. It is a pity that none of his earliest works have found their way here, for they would have shown that he went through a long course of severe labour before he achieved the power of painting in the loose, slight manner of his later drawings. Though nothing from his hand is undeserving of study, and there are some score of examples here, we shall only particularize the Vale of Llanrwst (83) as notable for beauty of colour and power; and Landscape and Sheep (178) as one of the best drawings in the Exhibition, and almost a warning to our painters of the present day, it is so wonderfully simple in subject and so perfect in every quality required in a painting of landscape.

The one drawing by Turner of Oxford is evidently a view of that city. It is exceedingly noble in design, and painted with great force and simplicity. Altogether it is an admirable example.

Copley Fielding is scarcely so well represented as might be wished; and we find none of those drawings of mist-wreathed downs, that he so often painted. But the Landscape (186) is very charming in colour, and somewhat like Barrett; and Byland Abbey (391) is a very fine drawing, the distance being especially beautiful. There are also some sea pieces, interesting perhaps, but not especially meritorious.

In a second and concluding paper we purpose to speak of the examples of modern work, commencing with J. M. W. Turner, and the drawings by living artists.

TOWN TALK,

AND THINGS IN GENERAL.

"SCHOOL" AT THE PRINCE'S THEATRE.

MR. Frederick Younge and his company commenced a month's engagement at the Prince's Theatre on Monday last, in Mr. Robertson's charming comedy *School*. The cast is the same as last year with two exceptions. By the substitution of Miss Benyon for Mrs. Dyas as the representative of the schoolmistress the performance neither gains nor loses; indeed, but for the play-bill we should hardly have detected the change. But the absence of Herr Narciss Garson is a real loss. His impersonation of Krux, the usher, was superb, and Mr. Branscombe, though he plays carefully and conscientiously, cannot but suffer by comparison with his predecessor in the part. Of the rest of the company, as of the play itself, what can we say that we have not said before? The plot of *School* may have serious faults—the last act is quite a marvel of inartistic construction—but there is an ineffaceable charm about the lovely idyll which no repetition can pall and no merely critical instinct destroy. In its representation Mr. Younge's company have acquired a finish and completeness which falls little short of perfection. They can desire no greater tribute to the excellence of their performance than the happy laughter, the rapt attention, and the hearty applause which have greeted their efforts every evening this week in Manchester.

CHARITY PERFORMANCES.

Another amateur performance in aid of the local charities! It is time to stop this. The thing is becoming a monomania and a nuisance. It can no longer be concealed that what moves amateurs to exhibitions of their incapacity, is far less charity than vanity. There has been quite enough done for the local charities this year. A sufficient number of persons have been martyrized. It's bad enough to part with money in these times. To sit out amateur performances as well, is more than flesh can bear.

"UNANIMITY" OF JURIES.

In two cases, at the recent Court of Record, juries were unable to agree. They both sent in to know if the opinion of the majority would be taken as the verdict. In the first case, this course was assented to by the parties. In the second, it was not. The jury was remitted to consultation; and in an incredibly short space of time returned a "unanimous" verdict upon a point which three or four hour's consultation had not united them upon before. In plain English, some of them committed perjury, under compulsion of the law. It is absurd to say they were at liberty to go on disagreeing, if their consciences required them. Imprisonment, and deprivation of meat, drink, and fire, is about as near an approach to the institution of the rack as the age will tolerate. In principle it is the same. And it is hard indeed that what the spirit of the time will not allow to be applied to criminals, it should allow to be applied to presumably honourable men in the discharge of a most onerous, responsible, and thankless duty. But bad as coercion is in itself, as applied to juries, it is not till one remembers that each juror is sworn to "true verdict give, according to the evidence, so help him God," that the shameful iniquity of the system is seen in all its abominableness. We would not be too severe upon the jurors whom

the law compels to perjure themselves. It is hard enough to do what's right, without cold, hunger, thirst, and half-a-dozen angry fellow-prisoners urging you to do what's wrong. And it may be argued that a law which with one hand compels you to swear you'll do one thing, and with the other forces you to do another thing, makes a mockery of the oath which it administers, and quite absolves you from paying the least attention to it. The mole blindness of the advocates of "unanimity" is extraordinary. It is curious to conceive how it can possibly not be obvious to what is commonly called "the meanest capacity," that wherever coercion comes into play, the "unanimity" which results from it is only a sham unanimity. If verdicts by majority were taken, there would be just as much real unanimity then as there is now. Whenever juries were really unanimous, there would be no difference between the two systems. It is only when they disagreed, that the present custom would be altered; and since the present custom is to compel them to commit perjury, the sooner it is altered the better. We know we have said this over and over again: but in this country—as in other countries—things have to be said over and over again, before they get attended to. The next few sessions of parliament will revolutionize the whole constitution of the law. Let us hope that this fine crusted old abuse will come in for its share of abolition.

MENAGERIE PROCESSIONS.

Another of these lumbersome processions wended its laborious way through some of the back thoroughfares of Manchester one day last week. It is a grotesque and somewhat melancholy sight to see a number of depressed camels and dispirited dromedaries dragging their unwieldy forms along our hard rough pavements, harnessed to a gilt chariot generally containing an obstreperous brass band. We are strongly moved to suspect that there is, at any rate in some weathers, a considerable degree of cruelty in this sort of performance, and we commend it to the notice of the proper officers. It is too bad to make feet formed for the sands of the desert trapse over the vile new-laid macadam, innocent of steam-rollers, which they cannot fail to encounter at some portions of their unhappy pilgrimage. The poor quadrupeds, with nothing on their feet, may well appear to have a great deal on their minds. Mr. Manders, the proprietor of this menagerie, wrote a letter to our papers, not so long ago, most properly condemning feeding serpents with live rabbits: so that if the hardship of these processions (at sometimes, at any rate) is demonstrated to him, doubtless he will be no party to them any longer.

TURF TIPSTERS' ADVERTISEMENTS.

Sir Joseph Hawley has been asking the Jockey Club—a sort of Turf parliament—to adopt a series of reforms, with a view to the removal of various evils connected with racing which prejudicially affect society. One of his proposals attacks the system of advertising adopted by racing prophets, to which we referred in an article on "Our Daily Papers," a few weeks ago. Sir Joseph Hawley asked the Jockey Club "to apply to the Home Secretary to introduce a bill enacting the most stringent provisions against all advertisements and announcements by tipsters, commission agents, and list-house keepers. Such a bill as this would be *the climax of reform*, it would be a blessing to every class of society, and save from perdition many a young man to whom these inducements and facilities for constant gambling are irresistible" It appears that the Jockey Club has refused to accept Sir Joseph Hawley's suggestions; but the press (and especially the Manchester daily papers—the great offenders) has it within its power to carry out this salutary reform without the intervention either of Jockey Club or the Home Secretary, and should not wait until it is compelled.

THE BILLIARD CHAMPIONSHIP.

William Cook, after holding the billiard championship two months, has succumbed to John Roberts, junior, the son of the old champion. St. James's Hall was again the scene of the contest, but it was far from crowded as on the occasion when Cook met Roberts, senior. As in the previous match, so now the table differed from those in ordinary use; the pockets being smaller and the spot being moved nearer the cushion. The result was that Roberts failed to score more than 55 in a break, and Cook proved unable to put together more than 53. Roberts played well and was repeatedly applauded. Cook played miserably and was hissed. To Cook, with his nervous temperament, this expression of disapproval was a complete upset, and together with the uproar and confusion, occasioned by a disputed stroke, it unnerved him so effectually that he stumbled at the easiest shots and literally collapsed. In three hours and ten minutes Roberts ran over his thousand and won by 478 points. It would be absurd to accept this game as any indication of the relative merits of the players. On an ordinary table Cook holds Roberts perfectly safe. He has beaten him over and over again, and has, during the past twelve months, undeniably proved himself the better player. Where, however, the spot-stroke becomes barred, as it is practically on the new style of table, Roberts's position is considerably improved and his chance of success much greater, but although he is a splendid all-round player and a wonderful long-hazard striker, still we consider Cook his superior in the proportion of three to two. Roberts, in occupying the position of champion, has placed himself in an insecure seat. We do not think there is a player living who can keep it against all-comers for three years. Already there are two other aspirants in the field: Alfred Bowles first, and Joseph Bennett next, both of whom have issued challenges to play whoever may be champion at the time their notice ends. Both are excellent players. In our estimate of their respective powers we place Bennett before Bowles, and Roberts junior before them both. Cook, of course, we rank above them all, and whether he will ever be champion again entirely depends, in our opinion, upon the question whether he will play for it.

KNOTT MILL FAIR.

When daffodils begin to peer,
With heigh! the doxy over the dale,
Why then comes in the sweet o' the year;
How the red blood reigns in the winter's pale.

AUTOLYCUS.

EASTER week is drawing to a close. Knott Mill Fair is on the wane; and Lancashire is trickling back to work again. Deansgate is passable once more; and Camp Field is cooling down to its normal dulness; for one after another, nomadic exhibitions are preparing for flight to "fresh fields, and pastures new," leaving the gay and festive scene to Manders and to me. St. Matthew's lonely pile will soon, once more, be monarch of all the monotonous scene it surveys. In far-off country nooks, the "Peace-Eggers" have gone their round, singing—

"We're noan come'd a-beggin', mistress—
Nought o'th' sort o'th' kind;
We're come'd a-pace-eggin',
Becose it is time.
Then, swap yo'r hats round, lads,
To keep yo'r yeds warm;
An' a saup o' good liquor
Will do us no harm."

Their songs are sung; their play is played out; and the tinsel fripperies of the great festival are laid by for another year. "Saint George, that noble knight," has doffed his pasteboard helmet; "Bold Slasher" has sheathed his wooden sword; "Little Devil Doubt," that imp of humourous fame, has retired to the plough-tail again; and Belzebub, his master, who lately,

"On his shoulder carried a club,
And, in his hand, a dripping-pan,
And thought himself a jolly old man,"

is, now, moodily tenting steam-looms. "It is all over, but shouting." The Easter carnival is ended; and the actors have gone to their homes, to don their working clothes again, and to "repair their golden fires" for the coming Whitsuntide.

Knott Mill Fair! Its origin dates far back in the dim records of the land, and it is the greatest fair of its kind in all the north of England. Knott Mill, Knut's Mill, Canute's Mill—so some writers derive the name. The same with Knuts-ford, Canute's Ford. Be this as it may, Camp Field, the scene of Knott Mill Fair, and the neighbourhood immediately around it, is rich in ancient historic association. Camp Field is the site of the famous Roman camp (Mamucum), which was the ground occupied by the ancient British town, before the Roman invasion. Here was the ancient man-nest, which the centuries have

developed into the swarming hive of modern Manchester. Hither, to his conical huts, the painted Celt—our first Manchester man—brought the spoils of the chase; here, in his woodland fortress, he milked his kine, and reared his savage brood. The ground now trodden by weltering crowds, "flounced, an' furbelowed, an' fither't to th' heels," with holiday finery—the ground which now resounds with showmen's cries and strains of musical uproar, riding triumphant above the mighty surge of a human sea, was once trodden by slow-pacing Roman sentinels; and the legions of Agricola have marched down Deansgate, on their way to the camp at Preston—for Deansgate was the exact line of the ancient Roman road. Ah, if those old Romans could get a peep at Camp Field now! But it cannot be. The shades of the great forest hide the departed from all record of life behind. The dead, that are remembered, know not of that remembrance; and the forgotten are heedless of forgetfulness. "So runs the world away." Let the Romans rest from their labours. Centuries after their time, the fair ground and its immediate neighbourhood, at Knott Mill, was the nucleus of old Manchester. There is some record of this still remaining, in "Aldport Town," near Camp Field. Country folk still know the spot by the name of "Upper-ton Fowt"—Ald-port Town Fold. It is hard to believe, as one looks round now upon the land, groaning beneath piles of brick farther than the eye can see, that a large tract in the neighbourhood of Camp Field was once occupied by a park belonging to the Earls of Derby. But it was so. However, it is all gone, long ago. A forest of chimneys occupies the ground. Let us say a few words about things as they are, at Knott Mill to-day.

We visited Camp Field on the first evening of the fair; when Deansgate was choked with a dense stream of holiday folk, all tending one way. Now and then, a bewildered cab came wading through the noisy swarm, with the driver shouting, "Heigh, heigh! Look out, there!" Long before we could get to the tail-end of the fair, the canvas-roofed stalls, laden with nuts, and ginger bread, and toys, were visible, lining the sides of Deansgate, a quarter of a mile down from the fair ground. On we went, jolting, and elbowing, through the thickening crowd, the complicated uproar growing denser at every stride. The evening was beautiful. Lads and lasses were whisking halfpenny brooms in each other's faces; and, on all sides, the squeak of penny trumpets was heard amidst the good-tempered storm of human voices. The shades of night were falling fast as we turned down the corner, leading to the fair ground, at Camp Field. How shall we get through this jolting pavement of restless humanity? Down the centre of the street we are borne along with the resistless stream, like corks on water; between banks piled with nuts, cakes, gingerbread, toys of all sorts and sizes, spirometers, weighing-machines, peep-shows, little huts baited with abnormal specimens of humanity, and "delicate monsters," from distant corners of the earth. On all sides, the glare and stench of naphtha lamps fills the air. Here we are, at last—wiping our moist brows—in the very heart of the fair. It is a scene of bewildering din; and glaring, staring, flaring tawdriness. The great local carnival is more crowded than ever Manders is here, with his famous menagerie; and a great circus troupe from the Amphitheatre. These are the principal features of the fair. On the platform, in front of the circus, the genial face of Wallett, the Queen's Jester, is visible; and, as he paces the platform, swathed in a great white overcoat, and quietly smoking a cigar, he is "the observed of all observers." There are ethescopes, or optical illusions, living skeletons, marionettes, theatres of art, performing horses, learned pigs, hairy men and hairless horses, a horse with horns growing from the hoof, a fire king, three female mountains of humanity, of various colours and different degrees of obesity; and all the usual features of a country fair, except the drama. We missed the dear old drama of the wooden booth. The mingled uproar was indescribable; bands of music, barrel-organs, drums, speaking-trumpets, gongs, and cymbals—all going at once—with the shouts of showmen on all sides—"Walk up, walk up! Be in time, be in time! Just a-going to begin!" What a strange life these wandering showmen must lead behind the scenes.

After visiting Manders' menagerie, we saw the marionettes; we had our fortunes told by a performing dog; we stroked the hairless horse; we patted the fat giantess on the shoulder; we saw the fire king dance on red hot iron and drink flaming spirits with a spoon; and we laughed at everything. After which, we worked our passage homeward again, with our pockets full of toys.

THE BISHOP OF MANCHESTER.

IT has been said that if a man desire the office of a Bishop he desires a good work. On the other hand we have heard of the expression, nolo episcopari: I wont be a Bishop, having been used. As far as we have been able to learn as to how it came about that Dr. Fraser became Bishop of Manchester, he not only did not ask but never even thought about asking for the appointment, though when it was offered to him he almost immediately decided to accept it. We can congratulate Manchester, the city and parish in particular, as well as Manchester the diocese in general, on the decision arrived at. Various were the names given by our daily and other contemporaries of the men spoken of as certain to be chosen. The local faction-leaders and other ecclesiastical men in buckram had all their turn. We were indeed ignorant at the time that one, whose name should be a symbol of truthfulness, had modestly represented his own wishes on the subject through the appropriate mediation of a trades union, but alas! the world knows nothing of its greatest men and the office was no longer vacant. A sagacious acquaintance of ours observed to us, during this interregnum, "Oh, Gladstone must know a lot of men good for the post that nobody down here ever heard of. Depend upon it he'll have one of that kind." It was a case of backing the field, and all the favourites turning up "nowhere."

Dr. James Fraser was educated under the celebrated Dr. Butler, at Shrewsbury School, whence he proceeded to Lincoln College, Oxford. He was Ireland Scholar and took a first class in Classics, gaining that distinction in company with Sir Stafford Northcote (once Gladstone's private secretary), Professor Jowett, and three others since unknown to fame. He afterwards became Fellow and Tutor of Oriel College, Oxford, and having been ordained on his fellowship, he accepted the living of Cholderton, in Wiltshire, which fell to his turn as a fellow of the College holding the right of presentation. While there, his administrative ability and taste for work seem to have been recognized, for he was one of the chaplains of the late Dr. Hamilton, bishop of Salisbury, chancellor of Salisbury Cathedral, and chaplain to the Diocesan Training School there—the income from all these offices being about equal to the traditionary pay of a midshipman, three farthings a year, paid quarterly. In 1860 Mr. Fraser exchanged his living in Wiltshire for the rectory of Upton Nervet, near Reading, which he held at the time of his nomination to these more northerly latitudes. The duties of a small country rectory not giving sufficient employment for his superabundant energy, he was appointed a special commissioner to enquire into the employment of women and children in agriculture. Our readers will probably remember reading the accounts which appeared in the public prints of the "ganging system," where troops of women and young people of both sexes were taken several miles' distance to work in the fields all day, and return home at night as best they could, and of the most horrible depravity thereby spread throughout the agricultural labouring classes. The Eastern Counties was the scene of Mr. Fraser's enquiries, and he presented, next year, as the result of his labours, several reports on the subject, which have been characterized as "very valuable." Mr. Fraser was also a member of what was called the Duke of Newcastle's Education Commission, and since then he has, at the request of the Government, travelled in the United States, to enquire into and report upon the Common School system there. All this shows the insatiable appetite of the man for work—hard work—none of your ten-guinea-a-day be-wigged commissioneering, whether bribery, bricklaying, or borough-mongering, but active personal concern for the safe-keeping and honour of the children, the boys and girls of those who, as a rule, are too careless and negligent, and—alas! that we should have it to say—too ignorant to care about it themselves in anything beyond the slightest degree.

If we stopped here in our description of the Bishop's former avocations, we should probably leave people to imagine that he had been more concerned in temporal matters than spiritual; that he was more of an official than an evangelist, and the error would be grave indeed. His efficiency in the pulpit has been so distinguished that he has been twice chosen Select Preacher before the University of Oxford. We had the opportunity of hearing him in this capacity on Sunday evening, when he preached in the Cathedral to the largest assemblage we ever

saw gathered there. The Bishop's voice, with the slightly metallic ring there is about it, was distinctly heard in every part of the vast building, except perhaps the choir. The sermon was a plain exposition of the effect which the dogma of the Resurrection had upon the mind, life, and conduct of St. Paul, judging from his Epistles, in which he endeavoured to communicate the effect produced upon him by it to the members of the several churches to which he wrote, and concluded with a notice of the various hindrances to religion experienced by the professing Christian of the present day. The style and the manner were totally different from anything we have before met with, but perfectly suited to the occasion and the man. In personal appearance Dr. Fraser is certainly not a representative bishop. He is about six feet in height, in first-rate condition as to training, and, as we should judge, perfectly sound in wind and limb—not at all the sort of man to have a "difficulty" with. A decidedly muscular Christian, without an ounce of fat or superfluous flesh about him; his hair of a dusky sandy brown colour, cut close and short like that of an athlete.

We are not of those who desire to exalt Dr. Fraser at the expense of Dr. Lee. It may be that the latter was a necessity, though a stern one, for his time. Of his successor—*speramus meliora*. He has already, we will undertake to say, made himself better known to the laity of this part of the diocese than his predecessor was at any time of his life. His appetite for occupation appears to be enormous. After a short spell of conventional duty in the House of Lords, he has settled to the work of his diocese in earnest. Three confirmations in two days; preaching in the Cathedral on Sunday; District Missionary S.P.G. meeting on Monday; induction, on Tuesday, of new rector at St. James's *coram episcopo*, the first function of the kind ever seen in Manchester; Wednesday, a charity meeting at the Town Hall; and on Thursday the yearly field-day of the Diocesan Church Building Society, besides the every-day work of receiving deputations and the necessary official routine, are surely enough to give the world assurance of a man—and a bishop. Assuredly it will not be his fault if the Church falters or fails in any part of its duty to the teeming population of the diocese of Manchester.

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS ON 'CHANGE.

II.

THE subscribers to the Exchange, speaking broadly, may be divided into two classes—buyers and sellers. Some few continue to frequent the room who are neither one nor the other, but merely go there from force of habit to read the papers, hear the news, or gaze out of the windows. It is a popular belief, founded partly on fact and partly on fiction, that buyers are a more independent breed than sellers. This depends upon circumstances. If trade is brisk and goods are scarce the seller can afford to put his foot down, as the Yankees say, but if the reverse is the case he has but a poor time of it. The big-wigs among the buying houses, the commercial athletes like Dubois, Le Bœuf, or Omnium & Co., are approachable enough. It is more frequently the buyers "man," who is remarkable for a quality which we may describe by a word which lately appeared in a correspondence in high quarters, and which came under the jurisdiction of Lord Penzance, namely, "bumptiousness." So also with the selling firms. The large men can afford to snap their fingers at the buyers, as they are necessary to them, but the case is different with small men who have not absolute control over the goods which they offer. These, as a facetious seller of cop-twist described them to us, are "the small fry which flicker round the great luminaries," and they are generally distinguishable for a good deal of obsequiousness, shaking of hands, and other demonstrations of admiration, esteem, and friendship.

It is quite a fallacy to imagine that every buyer of calico or yarn or any other commodity deals with every seller of the same. On the contrary, the number of customers on the books of both buyers and sellers is comparatively limited at any given time, and it is just as likely as not that, if you have large transactions going on with Omnium & Co., you will not be doing anything with Gatherum & Co. at all. Moreover, sellers keep gradually and imperceptibly changing their customers as a doctor does his patients, and, as that functionary would lose all his practice unless fresh people fell ill, so would a cotton spinner or his agent cease to do business unless he kept getting new customers from time to time. Sometimes a seller will be dealing chiefly with the Scotch houses, and at another time with the Greeks, Jews, and Philistines. Frequently, do what he will, a seller cannot obtain a footing with certain buyers, even although he may have the goods which they require and he is prepared to sell them as cheap as any one else, sometimes even cheaper. We have known a seller of calicoes approach with diffidence the great Omnium and offer his wares. Omnium receives him with affability, and tells him to send in a sample bundle. Shortly afterwards the vendor repairs to the great potentate's warehouse, sees Omnium or his "man Friday," and is told that the cloth won't do, and is not good enough. Having got hold of this cloth with some difficulty, and knowing that Omnium is a constant buyer of the same, Mr. Vendor retires somewhat chap-fallen. During the afternoon, Omnium buys the identical cloth from another house with which he is in the habit of dealing!

Commercial dealing on the Manchester Exchange is conducted with as much rectitude and probity as it is in any other market that we know of in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, and the old saying is not without foundation, that an Englishman's word is as good as his bond. The great bulk of the business is conducted by word of mouth, and without written contracts. Nevertheless, if we were to assert that the moral law, as summarily comprehended in the ten commandments, is sufficiently appreciated and acted upon, we should deceive ourselves, and the truth would not be in us. In fact, a good deal of the "truth" on 'Change is according to the gospel of that oleaginous gentleman, the reverend Chadband of pious memory, fat, unctuous and oily. Some of the most incorrigible offenders in this way are strongly perfumed with the odour of sanctity, a sort of greasy sanctimoniousness which is very oppressive at times. We shall not roundly assert that some large merchants and manufacturers are, commercially speaking, unmitigated liars. To put it more mildly we shall merely observe that we seldom believe a word they say. Without alluding to such tricks of trade as damped yarn, filled goods, short weights, repudiated contracts, and other dodges, we must admit that a good deal of quiet fibbing and mild cheating takes place. Bolstering up rotten manufacturers, and encouraging cotton spinners and their agents to trust them, is a system which is unsavoury, to say the least of it. In the playful science of fibbing, the seller is as proficient an adept as the buyer. He will coolly tell you that he has had so much offered for his stuff, when he knows that he has had nothing of the kind, and you know it too, and very likely he knows that you know it. But that makes little difference. Some buyers will never buy, unless they have a concession made to them. The seller knows this, and, to begin with, he asks more than he intends to take. The buyer is pleased with his bargain, the seller with his, which is a legitimate although a somewhat round-about mode of doing business. Others again say what price they are prepared to give or take at once, and the transaction is closed without more ado. Sometimes, to obtain a new customer, a seller will take a lower price than he would otherwise have done. As a seller of cop-twist once remarked to us, "When I wants to get in wi' a new customer, I takes hoff a-heighth of a penny, and when I have got in, I claps it hon agen."

No man is bound to tell the secrets of his own business, and when people ask ridiculous and impertinent questions they do not deserve direct answers. Nevertheless, unnecessary story-telling is greatly in vogue, and some people absolutely go out of their way to tell such crammers, and the habit becomes so notorious with them, that they cease to have any effect. Besides this habit of fibbing, we regret to say that there is another vicious custom prevalent on 'Change; to call it by a mild name, Kleptomania! Whether it is practised by the subscribers or by interlopers who endeavour to cheat the proprietors, we cannot exactly say, but that it exists is a fact. If any one doubts it, let him deposit a good umbrella in one of the two antiquated umbrella stands, which look as if they had been made by Tubal-cain, the first artificer in brass and iron on record. People have got to know this very well, these repositories are mostly filled by fat Gampish-looking old ginghams and alpacas, the proprietors of silk umbrellas sticking to their property with sedulous tenacity, however wet and dripping they may be. Visits from officers of the detective department are therefore by no means unnecessary, but when we find that some large manufac-

turers, merchants, and magistrates, have attended 'Change for years without paying their subscriptions, one may cease to wonder at the disappearance of a stray umbrella or two.

QUAINT SCRAPS OF NORTHERN HUMOUR.

BY EDWIN WAUGH.

THE CHURCH IN DANGER.

AT a great rent dinner, in Lancashire, the table was set out with unusual art. In the centre there was a fine piece of confectionery, in the shape of a church, snowed over with melted sugar. This strange device was the subject of considerable comment among some of the moorland tenants. When the clatter was beginning to subside, the chairman suddenly plunged his knife into it, and cried out, "Come, lads; who'll have a bit o' this church?" "Hello, Jack," said one of the tenants to his friend, "It's time to be gooin'; sitho; *they're startin' o' heytin' th' orniments!*"

FOG SIGNALS.

To count her horns, wi' a' my power,
I set mysel',
But, whether she had three or four,
I couldna' tell.

(Drunken Swell, meets a drunken Workman.)

SWELL.—'Scuze me, sir; but is that the sun or the moon that's shining?"

WORKMAN.—Well; I can't justly tell, maister. I don't belung this quarter."

"ET TU, BRUTE!"

A stout old country manufacturer, whose affairs had fallen into the Court of Bankruptcy, was undergoing examination before the commissioners, as to his expenditure. He had been a very self-indulgent man; and, as the scrutiny was unusually severe, the perspiration burst from the old man's brow, and he begged that they would "ax him no moor about it; for it wur makin' him ill." The scrutineers, however, were merciless, and, in the midst of the old man's distress, a troubled rumble arose in his interior, when, smiting his paunch with his hand, he cried out, "*Thee howd* THY *din; I owe* THEE *nowt, as heawe!*"

THE RENT DINNER.

"Theer!"

LANCASHIRE GRACE AFTER MEAT.

(Farmers at a Rent Dinner.)

"Come, Sam, thou hasn't done bi now, sure?"

"Nawe, nawe! I'm nobbut lettin' it sattle a bit. I'll undo another button directly."

"Here; I'll join tho at one o' these tarts."

"Nay, thae winnot. I'll join tho at a barrowful, if thae's a mind."

(The Chairman rises.)

OMNES.—Order for th' cheer!

CHAIRMAN.—Well, lads, I think yo'n takken th' rough edge off; an' as yo seem'n to be sattlin' down a bit, I've a word or two to say—that is, if yo'n time to hearken. *(Get forrud, owd lad!)* Well, if I mun tell yo my mind, I think yo'n done very weel while yo'n bin agate o' this job. There has been some stuff put out o' seet i' this hole, in a little time. *(Hear, hear! Thou hasn't done amiss, thisel'!)* Yo'n clear't th' stoo' like winkin'! But it's nobbut what I expected; for when I took this cheer, and looked round, I knew that there weer a lot o' th' primest plate-polishers at this table that could be pike't (picked) out o' th' whole shire. *(Hear, hear.)* Lads, I'm proud on yo! I hope what yo'n had 'll do yo no harm. I wish everybody i'th world had as good a dinner as we'n had this day! *(Amen to that! Get forrud! By th' mon thae talks like a angel!)* There's nobody that can worteh as they should do if they don't heyt as they should do. *(Hear him!)* Why, if yo'n clam (starve) a piece o' lond, it'll groo nought. But good meight's never thrut (thrown) away upo' sich chaps as yo. Yo're th' same at yo'r wark as yo are at yo'r meight—yo gwon nto't like men! There's nought can lick that! *(There isn't, owd crayter!)* Lads, I know yo! Yo're a sound-hearted lot; an' I wish yo good luck—fro' th' bottom o' mi crop! *(Amen again, say I! The same to thee, owd brid!)* Lads, it's done my heart good to see yo agate o' this job. Every mon here has played a good stick; an' bein' as such, I think it wouldn't be amiss if some on us said a bit of a "Grace" for what we'n had. I don't know that there's ony parsons amung us; but we can happen manage. Here, Sam; thi' uncle Joe wur a local preitcher! Come, get into thi looms!

OMNES.—Come Sam; up witho!

SAM.—Well; I'm noan gettin' up becose I want to shew mysel'—nought o' th' sort. If th' cheerman had letten me alone, I wur reet enough. But he wants me to say "Grace." Look at mo! Do I favvour a job o' that mak? I'm no hond at turnin' th' whites o' my e'en up—not I. I've had no practice. It's out o' my line, o'together. As long as I'm sit down I can do; but as soon as I get onto my legs I'm noather here, nor theer, nor nowheer else. An' I'll not ston here so long, yo may depend; for if I do, I'm sure to make a foo o' mysel'. Well; yo mun just tak it as it leets. I wish to the Lord that th' cheerman had pike't sombry else out, to say this "Grace." Not that I don't feel thankful—nought o' th' sort; but I'm noan use't to palaverin' about it. My uncle Joe wur a local-preitcher—reet enough. There isn't a mon between here an' Pendle Hill could lick him at hommerin' a pulpit-desk. I dar say that his fist would weigh about two pound an' three-quarters, good weight. It wur verry weel known to some folk; an' it went bi th' name o' th' Ranter's Mallet! an' when he let (alighted) of a rough congregation, that had made up their minds not to be convarted, he use't to come out of his tub, an' challenge 'em to feight; for he said that some folk wur like nuts—yo couldn't get at their souls beawt (without) crackin' th' shell a bit. Beside this, he wur as good a hond at sidin' frog-i'th'-hole puddin', as ever stept shoe-leather. Eh, I have sin him lay into 't, at after he'd finished a roozin' sarmon! Well; I tak after him, i'th' heytin'-line; but preitchin' doesn't run i'th' blood, as far as I'm concarn't. An' now then, about this "Grace." I'm welly (well-nigh) done up; an' I hardly know what to say. But we'n had a good dinner; an' one connot help but feel better for it; partikilar when one remembers how mony folk there is 'at doesn't know where th' next meal's to come fro. Well—as th' cheerman says—yo'n bin at it, this day. I never see'd a bit o' heartier heytin' sin I wur born o' mi mother! An o' that I can say is—*Thank God 'at there's nobody brawsen!*

A SAILOR'S SHAKESPEREAN CRITICISM.—President Felton, in his *Familiar Letters from Europe*, relates the following incident that occurred on the good ship Daniel Webster, in which he was a passenger in 1853:—"Last night I read some passages from the *Midsummer Night's Dream* to the captain. When I came to the description of the mermaid riding upon the dolphin's back, he pronounced it a humbug. 'The Dolphin's back,' said he, 'is as sharp as a razor, and no mermaid could possibly ride the beast unless she first saddled him.'"

WIT.—Almost all the great poets, orators, and statesmen of all times have been witty. When wit is comoined with sense and information; when it is softened by benevolence, and restrained by strong principle; when it is in the hands of a man who can use it and despise it, who can be witty and something much better than witty, who loves honour, justice, decency, good nature, morality, and religion, then a thousand times better than wit; wit is then a beautiful and delightful part of our nature. There is no more interesting spectacle than to see the effects of wit upon the different characters of men; than to observe it expanding caution, relaxing dignity, unfreezing coldness—teaching age, and care, and pain to smile—extorting reluctant gleams of pleasure from melancholy, and charming even the pangs of grief. It is pleasant to observe how it penetrates through the coldness and awkwardness of society, gradually bringing men nearer together, and, like the combined force of wine and oil, giving every man a glad heart and shining countenance. Genuine and innocent wit, like this, is surely the flavor of the mind! Man could direct his ways by plain reason, and support his life by tasteless food; but God has given us wit, and flavour, and brightness, and laughter, and perfumes, to enliven the days of man's pilgrimage and to "charm his pained steps over the burning marle."—*Sydney Smith.*

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THE BRIEF LETTER WRITER.

SOME amusing instances of laconic letters are given by Mr. Seton in his *Gossip about Letters and Letter-Writers.* Says Lord Berkeley to the Duke of Dorset: "My dear Dorset,—I have just been married, and am the happiest dog alive.—Berkeley." And gets for answer: "My dear Berkeley,—Every dog has its day!—Dorset." A young fellow at college wrote to his uncle, on whom he entirely depended: "My dear Uncle,—Ready for the needful.—Your affectionate Nephew." The uncle replied: "My dear Nephew,—The needful is not ready. —Your affectionate Uncle." It is pleasant that affection should survive pecuniary embarrassments, as it did in the case of Samuel Foote's mother and himself: "My dear Sam,—I am in prison for debt; come and assist your loving mother.—E. Foote." "Dear Mother, So am I; which prevents his duty being paid to his loving mother by her affectionate son. Sam. Foote." An English nobleman was deeply in love. He met the lady one evening at a crowded ball, and as he could not get an opportunity of talking to her, he contrived to slip into her hand a piece of paper with two words, "Will you?" written upon it. The reply was equally brief—"Won't I!" One would think that correspondence could scarcely be made more laconic than this; but the impossible has been achieved. Brother Smith, of Leeds, anxious to learn any news his friend and fellow quaker, brother Brown, of Sheffield, might have to communicate, sent him a quarto sheet with a point of interrogation inscribed in the centre. Brother Brown replied by sending a similar sheet on which nothing whatever appeared!

At an auction sale of water-colour drawings in London, recently, some of David Cox's works fetched remarkable prices. The Vale of Dolwyddelan sold for 500 guineas; Brough Castle, near Kendal, 590 guineas; The Outskirts of a Forest, 800 guineas; and The Change of the Pasture, 1,150 guineas. All these, we believe, are small drawings.

A ROLAND FOR AN OLIVER.—A man, while passing through a meadow near Cork, was attacked by a large mastiff, and he stabbed the dog with a pitchfork he had in his hand. The master of the dog brought him before the magistrate, who asked why he had not rather struck the dog with the butt-end of his weapon. "So I should have done," said the man, "if he had run at me with his tail."

THE IRISHMAN AND THE NEGRO.—In the old stage-coach days an Irishman was travelling in New England. Arriving late at the town where they were to spend the night, Pat discovered, to his dismay, that his only chance for sleep was to share the couch of a coloured brother. The natural repugnance of his race made him loth to accept the situation, but, being very tired, he submitted with as good a grace as possible. In the night some mischievous boys blackened his face. In the morning fifteen miles were to be travelled before breakfast. Our Celtic friend was wakened just in time to spring into the carriage as it was moving off. At their stopping place he found no convenience for washing. Stepping up to a glass to arrange his hair, he started back in horror, exclaiming, "Be jabers, they've woke that durty nagur, and left me fifteen miles behint!"

ANXIETY AND LABOUR.—You cannot escape from anxiety and labour; it is the destiny of humanity. You may avoid indeed, to a great extent, (some at least may,) taking part in the struggle of life, in the sharp and eager competition of an open profession, or the not less intense pursuit of some worthy object of study. But, by what seems to me a just and wholesome retribution, those who shirk from facing trouble find that trouble comes to them. The indolent may contrive that he shall have less than his share of the world's work to do; but Nature, proportioning the instinct to the work, contrives that that little shall only the more weary him.—*Lord Stanley (now Earl Derby.)*

A GREAT ARTIST'S APPROVAL.—"What do you ask for this picture?" said Sir Joshua Reynolds to an old picture dealer, whose portfolio he was looking over. "Twenty guineas, your honour."—"Twenty pence, I suppose, you mean?"—"No, sir; I would have taken twenty pence for it this morning; but if you think it worth looking at, all the world will think it worth buying."

THE KING AND HIS COAT.—King William of Prussia is not lavish on personal apparel. His valet recently gave him a hint by substituting a new coat for one which he had worn two or three years longer than he ought, and was thereupon summoned to the royal presence. "Where is my old coat, Jean?"—"I have taken it away, your Majesty; it is no longer fit to be worn."—"What are you going to do with it, Jean?"—"I believe I am going to sell it."—"How much do you think you will get for it?" This was hard to answer, for no old clo' Jew in the world would have given a shilling for the old coat. Jean, therefore, hesitated a moment, and then answered: "I believe I shall get about a dollar for it, your Majesty." The king took his pocket-book from the table, opened it, and handed Jean a dollar. "Here is your dollar, Jean," said he. "That coat is so comfortable; bring it back to me; I want it yet."

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There has been a good deal of discussion as to which of our English Kings was the first to sign his own name. From the *fac-similes* of national manuscripts, Richard II. would appear to be entitled to the distinction in a document bearing the date of 1386. The first holograph letter in the same collection is from the pen of the Prince of Wales, afterwards Henry V (1413-22).

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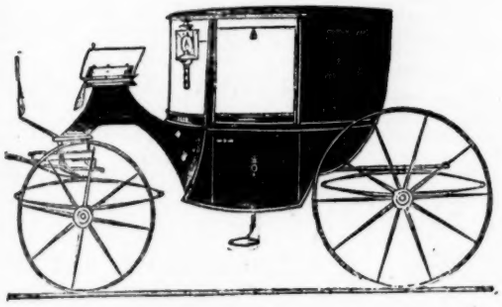

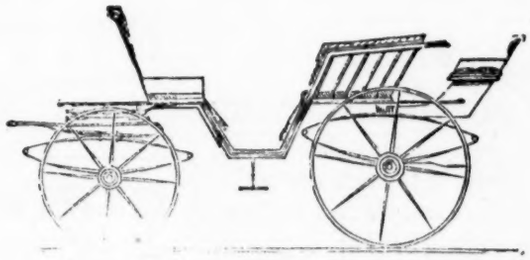

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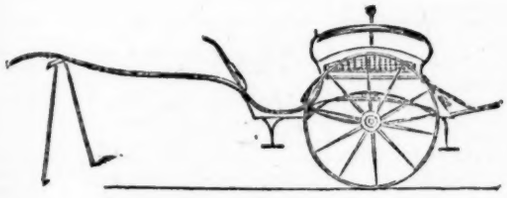

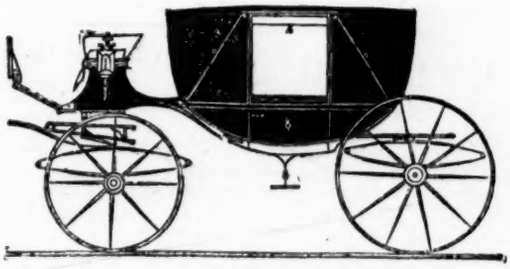

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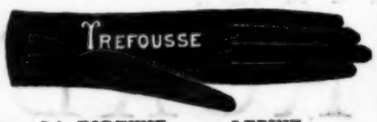

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